



USA Today Names Exhibit a Top 10 Must-See of the Summer

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A "Top 10 Must-See Exhibit" of the Nation - USA Today

***For Whom It Stands:
The Flag and the American People***
May 17, 2014 - February 28, 2015

Inspired by
the untold story of the
African American
behind the
Star-Spangled Banner



TeKeyia and David by Sheila Pree Bright

May 12, 2014, BALTIMORE - [USA Today](http://www.usatoday.com/story/experience/america/best-of-lists/2014/05/07/10-must-see-museum-exhibits-this-summer/8811633/) has named the upcoming exhibition in its 'Top 10 Must-See Exhibits this Summer' (<http://www.usatoday.com/story/experience/america/best-of-lists/2014/05/07/10-must-see-museum-exhibits-this-summer/8811633/>) in the nation. The Reginald F. Lewis Museum's newest exhibition, *For Whom It Stands: The Flag and the American People*, explores the U.S. flag and the diversity of Americans for whom the flag stands, as represented through artwork and artifacts.

Inspired by Grace Wisher, the 13-year old African American girl who contributed to the creation of the Star-Spangled Banner as an indentured servant in Mary Pickersgill's household, the exhibition is on view May 17, 2014 - February 28, 2015, in conjunction with the 200th anniversary of the Star-Spangled Banner. A special preview of the exhibition will be held **Wednesday, May 14 at 9am** at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum, 830 East Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD. Please email marketing@maamc.org (<mailto:marketing@maamc.org>) to RSVP no later than Tuesday, May 13 to attend.

The African American contributor to the Star-Spangled Banner

During the War of 1812, flag maker Mary Pickersgill sewed the original Star-Spangled Banner in a house on the same city block as the Reginald F. Lewis Museum. While Pickersgill's story is well-known, less mentioned is the story of Grace Wisher. Wisher's personal effects are not displayed here and may have been lost to history. Her untold story urged us to share other stories about the flag, so that they are not lost.

Stories span pride to protest

For Whom It Stands features more than 100 works of art, artifacts, documents, and photographs that reflect the breadth of American experiences. *The Veteran* is a mixed media work on skateboard by Rafael Colón, a self-taught Puerto Rican artist. *A Tribute to New York City* sculpted by Israeli-American Dalya Luttwak sits in the same show as *Prayer Rug for America*, by the Arab American, Helen Zughaib. Other pieces include a photograph of the Navajo code talkers who communicated the message to soldiers to raise the U.S. flag at the Battle of Iwo Jima, and a mixed media work by Chinese-American Flo Oy Wong about the detention of Chinese immigrants at Angel Island. **Gordon Parks' American Gothic**, a sobering portrait of a woman in front of the flag, with a broom in one hand, and mop in the other, is a biting riff on Grant Wood's famous work of the same name. [View and download hi-res images of the show](https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0Bw-0XL4X9mmgLU1KUXJmU0E4eW8&usp=sharing) (<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0Bw-0XL4X9mmgLU1KUXJmU0E4eW8&usp=sharing>).

A fragment of the original Star-Spangled Banner serves as a starting point to investigate the broad history and representation of the United States flag as an icon of our nation and its people. A sound installation curated by beat box artist Shodekeh features pivotal interpretations of the national anthem.

A section dedicated to **controversial interpretations of the flag** includes *The People's Flag Show* by Faith Ringgold, a seminal artist in the canon of flag art. The work was created to advertise an exhibition for which she and two other artists were arrested shortly after the show opening.

Military history is included here. For the first time, items from the museum's **L. Albert Scipio Collection** of minority military artifacts will be on display.

"*For Whom It Stands* seeks to tell the stories of the flag with a wide-angled perspective in which we all can see ourselves reflected in the national fabric," says the exhibition's curator, Dr. Michelle Joan Wilkinson.

Key Programs

New Mural at City Springs School Unveiled May 17, 2014

Fine art photographer and artist-in-residence Sheila Pree Bright photographed museum visitors and students of City Springs School during her residency. She asked the subjects to pose with the flag to elicit their opinions on what it means to be American. Select portraits are the source for two new photo installations: one inside the museum and the second at City Springs Elementary/Middle School, 100 South Caroline Street in Baltimore, Maryland. Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake visits the installation process at City Springs School on May 14 at 11 am.

Premiere Performance: O Say Can You Feel - Stories Inspired by National Flags May 17, 2014. 11am & 1pm

In this premiere performance, several individuals share their true stories of flag-related memories, including a man who was neighbors with the men who brutally murdered Emmett Till and who then lost his fiancée on 9/11. Weaving music, poetry, movement, and song throughout, this original program stirs us to reflect on our own relationship to our flag, our country, and to each other. The director, Harriet Lynn of Heritage Theatre Artists' Consortium, leads a post-performance discussion between the participants and the audience.

Caribbean Heritage and Wave Your Flag Celebration June 14, 2014. 12-4pm

During Caribbean American Heritage Month, we screen *The Merikens*, a documentary about a community in Trinidad descended from enslaved people of the Chesapeake. The ancestors of Merikens were runaway slaves who joined the British forces during the War of 1812. In exchange for their service, they were resettled in a British colony after the war. St. Veronica's Youth Steel Orchestra closes out the afternoon with a Caribbean-style rendition of our National Anthem. The event is a part of the Smithsonian's national Raise It Up celebration.

Companion Exhibit *For Whom It Stands, TOO* Opens July 1, 2014-September 14, 2014

The museum held an open call for flag-related artwork. Selected works are included in *For Whom It Stands*, and in this companion exhibition. *For Whom It Stands, TOO* will be on view at the Star-Spangled Banner Flag House & Museum, 844 E. Pratt Street, Baltimore, Maryland.

The National Anthem, Remixed September 14, 2014. 5pm

Renowned beat box artist Shodekeh leads a new interpretation of the national anthem using virtuoso

vocal percussion. Performers include the Baltimore Boom Bap Society, a group that performs improvised hip hop, and Classical Revolution, a collection of classically-trained musicians who perform classical music in unexpected places.

The exhibition and programs have been financed in part with State Funds from the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission, an instrumentality of the State of Maryland. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission.

About the Reginald F. Lewis Museum

The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture is Baltimore's premier facility highlighting the history and accomplishments of African Americans with a special focus on Maryland's African American community. A Smithsonian affiliate, the museum is the East Coast's largest African American museum, occupying an 82,000 square-foot facility with ample permanent and special exhibition space, interactive learning environments, auditorium, resource center, oral history recording studio, museum shop, café, classrooms, meeting rooms, outside terrace and reception areas. The museum is located near Baltimore's Inner Harbor at the corner of Pratt and President Streets. The museum is also accessible on Baltimore's Charm City Circulator Orange and Green Routes. For more information, please call 443-263-1800 or visit www.RFLewisMuseum.org (<http://r20.rs6.net>

http://tn.jsp?e=001Qqhv6EJhVhaxaq44p6c09vwdo4UGo7BJ_zzGPAfDIOMqNjfbisGeaVjakurM38rjNuwOQP6eGprT1Q3lhkbhq2CNFoFDxHYb_gej9Ea0-FE=)



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